



Reclamation Research Unit

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Date: October 7, 2003

To: Sue Sillick

From: Stuart Jennings

Re: Progress Report 1. *Evaluation of Organic Matter Addition and Incorporation on Steep Cut slopes, Phase II: Test Plot Construction and Performance Monitoring*

The first progress report on Phase II of the above referenced project is attached. Award of funding for this project occurred in mid-August. The Phase I contract expired on September 30, 2003 and was fulfilled by completion of the Phase I Report

Quarterly Progress Report #1
For the period August 19, 2003 – September 30, 2003

**EVALUATION OF ORGANIC MATTER ADDITION
AND INCORPORATION ON STEEP CUT SLOPES**

***Phase II: Test Plot Construction and
Performance Monitoring***

Prepared For:

Montana Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 201001
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Prepared By:

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October 2003

Task Analysis and Discussion

Phase 1 of the Evaluation of Organic Matter Addition and Incorporation on Steep Slopes project was initiated in April of 2003 with a literature review and equipment evaluation. The final Phase 1 Report was prepared and finalized in August 2003. Concurrent with completion of Phase 1, the second phase of the project commenced. This project report summarizes progress on Phase 2, Test Plot Construction and Performance Monitoring. The contract and budget for Phase 2 was approved on August 19, 2003. This first quarterly report, therefore, summarizes the period August 19, 2003 through September 30, 2003.

Two principal activities occurred during this period. The first project activity was a meeting with the Technical Panel in Helena on August 28, 2003 to launch the second phase of the work. The second significant work activity that occurred during the quarter was planning for construction of research plots at the Happy's Inn site. These tasks are discussed in further detail below. Tasks F through M were identified in the proposal as specific work items. Work occurred under several of the tasks during the past quarter.

Task F Preconstruction Meeting

The scope of this task is to attend one or more preconstruction meetings for the Colstrip South project. The intent was to establish communication lines with both Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) project personnel and the contractor. MDT and contractor expectations for personnel working on site were to be discussed. Meetings were expected to occur in Miles City. An initial preconstruction meeting was scheduled for June 23, 2003.

A project preconstruction meeting occurred in Helena on August 28, 2003. Personnel from MDT responsible for the Colstrip South project participated by telephone. The project Technical Panel attended the Helena meeting along with Sue Sillick and Phil Johnson. After completion of the teleconference, MSU was asked to prepare a Scope of Work (SOW) describing plot construction activities anticipated. The SOW was prepared and distributed. No further progress occurred following distribution of the SOW on September 2, 2003 (see narrative below discussing project problems and issues).

It is expected that additional preconstruction meetings may occur at the Colstrip South project during the fourth quarter of 2003 pending resolution of issues.

Task G Construction Schedule Coordination

This task requires MSU to interface with MDT and contractors to coordinate plot construction at both the Happy's Inn and Colstrip South project sites. Very limited effort has been expended on the Colstrip South project. Effort has been focused on soliciting subcontractors and coordinating with MDT personnel in support of the Happy's Inn project. Construction of the research plots at Happy's Inn is expected to occur during the week of October 20th. Subcontractors have been hired to provide and deliver compost, apply compost on the research area and incorporate compost on the slope. MDT Maintenance personnel have been solicited to support the project by providing a compost stockpile location near the project and to provide a front-end loader to fill the compost blower truck.

Task H Plot Construction

This task has not been initiated.

Task I Site Sampling

This task has not been initiated.

Task J Year 1 Monitoring

This task has not been initiated.

Task K Year 2 Monitoring

This task has not been initiated.

Task L Year 3 Monitoring

This task has not been initiated.

Task M Reporting

Completion of Quarterly Progress Report 1 initiates this task. The content of this memo fulfills the requirement for reporting during the first quarter. Subsequent progress reports and a Final Report will be prepared in accordance with the schedule.

Schedule and Degree of Completion

<i>Task Description</i>	<i>Planned Schedule</i>	<i>Actual Schedule</i>	<i>Degree of Completion</i>
Task F Preconstruction Meeting(s)	Third Quarter, 2003	August 28, 2003 and dependent on Colstrip South resolution	50%
Task G Construction Schedule Coordination	Third and Fourth Quarter, 2003	September 2003 and ongoing	50%
Task H Plot Construction	Fourth Quarter, 2003	NA	0%
Task I Site Sampling	Fourth Quarter, 2003	NA	0%
Task J Year 1 Monitoring	Spring and Fall, 2004	NA	0%
Task K Year 2 Monitoring	Spring and Fall, 2005	NA	0%
Task L Year 3 Monitoring	Spring and Fall, 2006	NA	0%
Task M Reporting	Quarterly and Final Report, Fall 2006	ongoing	5%

Problems and Resolution

During the August 28, 2003 meeting it became apparent that the amount of regrading generated fill material (~4000 cubic yards) at the Happy's Inn research site was in excess of the amount that could reasonably be removed and hauled off-site by MDT Maintenance personnel. It was decided during the meeting that an alternate research site needed to be identified. Phil Johnson agreed to find an alternate research area. Phil traveled to the Happy's Inn area in mid-September and identified alternate sites that do not require regrading. This issue is therefore resolved. Additional effort may be required by Phil prior to construction to communicate with the project team about characteristics of the new sites to facilitate planning and preparation.

During September 2003, phone conversations between Phil Johnson and MDT Construction personnel based in Miles City revealed some level of reluctance on the part of the Miles City staff to participate in a research project at the Colstrip South location. The availability of a research site remains uncertain. Ongoing efforts have been initiated by Phil Johnson to bring resolution to the issue. More discussion of this problem is expected during the fourth quarter of 2003.

Accomplishments

? Contractual arrangements between MSU and MDT have been completed. The current project will run through December 31, 2006.

? Phase II of the project was launched with a meeting with the technical panel in Helena.

? Planning and contracting is nearly complete for the Happy's Inn project. The research plots will be constructed the week of October 20, 2003.

? Demonstration of several types of incorporation equipment will occur adjacent to the Happy's Inn research sites during the week of October 20th. At this time, three equipment companies have agreed to demonstrate steep slope compost incorporation machinery at no cost to the project.

Fiscal Expenditure

Amount Spent by budget category

Labor and Benefits	\$2004.61
Operational Expenses	\$112.06
Indirect Charges	\$ 375.83
Total Spent	\$2492.50
 Total Project Award	 \$108,975.00
 Amount Remaining	 \$106,482.50

